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January 11, 2010



ROBERT STEELE
COMMISSIONER
2nd District

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Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker
Commissioner Mignon Clyborn
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: GN Docket No. 09-191

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners:

Today, American consumers enjoy better service, more innovation, variety of choices and lower prices for their Internet service. Broadband subscribers has grown from 22.9 million in June 2003 to over 132.8 million as of June 2008, according to the FCC's most recent report¹.

That's a five-fold increase in just five years, and represents the subscription of more than a third of all Americans. Many of my constituents are among those subscribers who have turned to this portable service.

The current regulations governing the Internet are working, while consumers are also receiving lower costs and faster access to service. That's why so many people continue to join and take advantage of available portable services.

However, adopting so-called "net neutrality" within the FCC's National Broadband Plan could dramatically slow that strong growth – limiting access and keeping the costs of adoption too high for areas and demographic groups that could benefit most, specifically the underserved community and the rural community.

The legislative and financial uncertainty created by such a policy damages broadband carriers' confidence in long-term growth and slows the rate at which they can expand service. If carriers are to be able to meet the increasing demand on their networks, there must be better incentives for them to continue investing in basic infrastructure to provide quality service to all members of our community.

I am grateful for the work done by the FCC thus far and respectfully encourage you to send a clear signal that the Commission prioritizes 100 percent broadband adoption above all else.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Steele".

Robert Steele
Cook County Commissioner
President of the National Association of Black County Officials

¹ *FCC, High-speed Services For Internet Access, July 2009*

